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THE

# Commonweal

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U. S. Policy in Europe

**by Henry S. Reuss**

## *Trouble in California*

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**by Ted Le Berthon**

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THE
# Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

## week by week

### THE THIRD WAY

ONE OF THE REASONS that the free world continues to lose ground to the Soviets and the Chinese Communists is that we have permitted the worldwide debate to narrow down to a simple choice: Socialism or Capitalism. This gives our increasingly powerful adversaries a decided edge from the start. To men of the underdeveloped areas, Capitalism is indissolubly identified with the colonial serfdom and exploitation to which they are impassionedly determined never to return. Capitalism to them means the European brand of their former rulers, with low wages, high profits for the few and a fearful gulf between owners' and workers' living standards.

The difficulties in persuading them of the virtues of the People's Capitalism which we proclaim in the United States are considerable. In this the propaganda of the Communists, for whom America is the principal target, is a decisive factor. Anti-Americans readily exploit the natural envy and resentment of the hungry and ill-clad by playing up our exalted living standards. And we furnish them with plenty of ammunition in our exported movies, our unyielding attitude on "defense" and our inadequate concern for the human needs of other peoples, whom we appear to regard primarily as pawns in the battle for the world. American Capitalism by itself exercises little attraction in these lands, and still less when viewed in alliance with various European Capitalisms.

Russia and China, moreover, enjoy a number of positive advantages. There are racial and geographical affinities. Each began to build up its modern economy, for whatever purpose, as an industrially backward nation, and China in many ways was itself a subservient European colony. Both, by somewhat differing Marxist methods, have been making giant strides toward productivity, economic self-reliance and industrial power. Each offers itself as a convincing working model of the best possible means for overcoming under-productiveness, poverty and subservience, and each carries out its anti-West and pro-Communist campaigns with an insistence and proficiency reflecting years of dedication, training and experience.

IF THE FREE world stands to lose immeasurably and irreparably from its present stance, is it not high time for the sort of stock-taking called for recently by Adlai Stevenson? Should not this country re-examine the extent and kind of its foreign aid programs, the effect of our barriers to international trade, our credit policies and others?

Here and there one hears the demand for new initiatives, for fresh ways of attacking this vital problem. Surely one of these would be to offer a way out that comprises neither Socialism nor Capitalism. The Cooperative Movement can point to a record of achievement among the have-nots of many lands. Its activities are prominent not only in such European countries as England, Denmark and Sweden but also in a number of underdeveloped lands Its techniques are therefore particularly well adapted for the emerging colonial peoples.

In Nova Scotia, where adult education through cooperative techniques has won world renown, those who have won a new lease on life are farmers, fishermen, coal miners and steel workers. Similar groups operate successfully in the other Canadian maritime provinces. This form of economic democracy is beginning to make some headway in the West Indies, where for some years there has been a vigorous development of credit unions. As a result—and through the encouragement of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference—these self-



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help organizations, which supply local farmers with desperately needed credit, are beginning to take root in Latin America as well. It is significant that only recently the Credit Union National Association of Madison, Wis. recently became an international organization, and that delegates from the Philippines, the British West Indies, South America and West Africa attended its annual meeting last month.

There are certain elements in the famed Bhoodan movement in India, which seeks fifty million acres for landless peasants, that harmonize well with the Cooperative Movement. The emphasis there is on non-state, local village democracy organized for the good of the community. Jayaprash Narayan, one of its most dedicated leaders, speaks of a "democratic cooperative life," and says that the people of India should solve their own problems individually and collectively (rather than rely on the Welfare State).

The West, then, does have at its disposal a way which is neither Capitalism nor Socialism. It involves credit unions, cooperative stores, cooperative producing and marketing, cooperative housing, adult education and all the rest. Because of its comparatively modest proportions it may seem unlikely as an influential factor in the wider power struggle. The fact, however, that its present numbers are limited constitutes an initial advantage.

Comparatively small sums invested in the International School of Social and Economic Development organized at St. Francis Xavier University of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, would supply the leader-training requested by a number of Latin American nations, for example. Nor would the cost of sending cooperative technicians to a number of key places on the globe be excessive. For a relatively modest expenditure the West could proffer economically underdeveloped nations a Third Way.

## ART AND IDEOLOGY

THE CENTRAL Committee of the Communist Party has added another note to the tangled history of the relations between art and Communist ideology. They have expunged from official records the accusations which were leveled against some of Russia's most prominent composers during Stalin's reign. The late Sergei Prokofieff, Dmitri Shostakovitch, Aram Khatchaturian and other lesser known composers were condemned by the Central Committee in 1948 for "anti-democratic tendencies in music that are alien to the Soviet people and their artistic tastes." This condemnation was guided by Stalin, who cared little for music that did not lend itself to whistling, and Andrei A. Zhdanov, the cultural commissar for Stalin at that time.

Most of the artists who were condemned apologized for their failures and "modernistic" distortions and promised to reform. This apology allowed them to continue working and, in some instances, even to win Party awards for their work. After the death of Stalin, however, they rose to a defense of their work and termed their critics "dogmatists." Now the Party decrees that these artists were unjustly accused of "formalistic perversion" and that the editorials which developed the charges were biased and unjust. These errors are now to be corrected: the editorial board of *Pravda* and various Party workers have been directed to make amends for their past mistakes. This being the new Party line, the paper and the loyal Party members will, of course, oblige.

The composers who were condemned are now refurbished and rehabilitated; the Central Committee which once condemned them now exonerates and honors them; the leading papers which published their disgrace now withdraw the haphazard application of charges of "formalism." Mr. Prokofieff, it is true, is not present to enjoy the personal victory of the composers. But the others are. And they have never, apparently, stopped working. What difference, then, do these successive condemnations and approvals signify? What is there here except material for comedy and satire?

It is, of course, always good to see the eventual recognition of what is valuable and meritorious, particularly when the recognition has had to overcome initial opposition. In this respect the new Party ruling can be welcomed. But the new ruling changes little that is essential. It is a particular ruling that operates within the same context as the condemnation it corrected. It, too, is based on the false premise that, by itself, an ideology provides criteria sufficient to evaluate an artistic work. It overlooks or minimizes those aspects of an esthetic work which make it the peculiar and individual thing it is. It overlooks the historical fact that, although artists have often put their talents in the service of that which claimed their allegiance, art has always escaped limitations forcibly imposed from without. Both rulings presuppose the ability to invade, both in man and his art, those areas which will not be subject to external controls. And both, further, confuse the relations which may and frequently do exist between art and politics.

Nor is it safe to say that these composers were



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untouched by the initial condemnation. Even though they were free to produce more work they were subject to various pressures, some more subtle than others, whose effects it would be foolhardy to minimize. This is the context of the new ruling, as it was of the old. The realization of this must temper any pleasure one takes in the apparent triumph of these composers.

## GOLDWATER VERSUS KENNEDY

THE SENATE'S bill to curb labor abuses, sponsored by Senators Kennedy of Massachusetts and Ives of New York, should reach the floor in the near future. In the subcommittee that prepared the measure, only one vote was cast against it—that of Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, who denounced it as a "sweetheart bill" containing few effective sanctions against abuses uncovered by Senator McClellan's Racket Committee. In the larger Labor Committee itself, Senator Goldwater again was the only man to vote against the measure, this time calling it a "milk toast bill" and promising to offer his own legislation on the Senate's floor as a substitute for it. When he does, he will undoubtedly get considerable support. The fact that Senator McClellan worked closely with Senators Kennedy and Ives on their bill and that he strongly endorses it is an important argument in favor of the bill, but the opposition of Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell, who has unexpectedly aligned himself with the measure's severest critics, raises new obstacles to its passage.

The Kennedy-Ives bill may not do all that many people think needs to be done, but it hardly seems accurate to say, as does Senator Goldwater, that it does little or nothing to check union abuses. The Senate passed a bill to deal with welfare and pension fund abuses some weeks ago. The present bill would ensure that national and local unions hold secret elections at specified periods; any member who thought such an election was not honestly conducted could appeal to the Secretary of Labor, who would then be able to seek a new election to be carried out under the supervision of a Federal court; certain dubious types of picketing would be barred completely; union reports would have to be public, and false reports or embezzlement of union funds would be a Federal offense. These are not trifling matters. Indeed, they grant the Federal Government powers that give pause to many people just as opposed to union abuses as Senator Goldwater or anyone else.

It should be noted here that a good many union leaders are reported to be angry at Senator Kennedy because they think his bill goes too far. On the other side, it can probably be said about many who want a much more rigorous bill what Senator Kennedy said about Senator Goldwater: "It is obvious that Senator Goldwater will be satisfied only with a bill that will destroy the American labor movement. This bill will not do that."

As things look now, the problem is not the Kennedy-Ives bill, which we consider far better than Senator Goldwater's proposals. The real problem in cases like this is that when too many people have an all-or-nothing attitude, it is hard to get any kind of legislation.

## EVERY DAY IN EVERY WAY

IN RETROSPECT, Secretary of State Dulles' recent review of United States foreign policy, delivered before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was quite characteristic, perhaps even inevitable. Still, surrounded in the newspaper columns by news of the recession, the crisis in France, stresses and strains within NATO, Lebanese bloodshed and Middle Eastern tensions, the successes of the Soviet trade offensive, and so on and on, his cheerful report to the Senators was at least momentarily startling.

Mr. Dulles touched vaguely on some of the difficulties besetting us and our allies, but quickly managed to turn them into grounds for self-congratulation. Referring to the differences which have grown up among the nations of the free world, the Secretary found satisfaction in the thought that "the hallmark of freedom is diversity"; regarding the loss of worldwide support for United States policies and the attrition of U.S. influence among its allies, Mr. Dulles said righteously that "we would rather stand alone than be accompanied by those who were with us only under the influence of a carrot or a stick."

Ignoring such phenomena as the recent explosions at a New Jersey Nike base, not to mention the widely publicized opinions of innumerable observers of both world affairs and human fallibility, Mr. Dulles declared the possibility of accidental nuclear war to be non-existent and the likelihood of major war to be receding. All in all, he said, U.S. foreign policy has "moved positively and creatively," while "Communist rulers are faced by grave and, in the long run, insoluble problems."

In a sense, Mr. Dulles is right, and much of



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what he said is not to be denied. "Despotisms," as he declared, "are always weaker than they appear," and, further, "democracies are usually stronger than they seem." Certainly the internal contradictions of the Soviet system will in time destroy that system, as the myths of Marxism have already been exposed by the events of history. "In the long run," as the Secretary said, the Communists are indeed "faced by insoluble problems."

But, as Chesterton once said, in the long run we shall all be dead. Surely now, at this crucial time in our history, self-congratulation by the people of the West, and especially by their leaders, is obviously not the thing needful. What is needful, in Washington, throughout the nation, in the capital cities of all the nations of the free West, is not righteousness and complacency, but a sober facing up to the enormity of the tasks before us and an equally sober determination to increase our efforts to accomplish them. The United States, especially, has been lethargic and automatic in its response to the Communist challenge; it is not words of comfort that we need, but exhortations to act—and think—with always greater imagination, courage, responsibility.

Mr. Dulles' Couéism is a dangerous substitute for the hard thought and hard work that make successful foreign policy.

## THE ITALIAN ELECTION

WHAT IS one to say about the victory of the Christian Democrats in Italy? That victory was predicted, in these pages and elsewhere, and it is always, of course, cause for rejoicing that the Christian Democrats have managed to win another election, for their failure would mean the accession to power of the Communists. Yet when one considers the Italian situation one cannot help but be troubled about the prospects for the future of that country.

This time the Christian Democrats did pick up a very small increase in popular support, largely at the expense of rightist parties. Considering the extent to which Christian Democrats were divided among themselves, this was no small achievement. But the Communists not only kept their usual large popular vote; they actually increased it. For many Italian intellectuals, Soviet conduct during the revolt in Hungary was the last straw, and they have abandoned the Communist Party in considerable numbers. But events in Hungary and elsewhere have apparently affected the popular vote not at all. Even more disturbing, it is reported that the rural areas this time gave the Communists more support than they ever have in the past.

We don't know the answer to all this. There is, certainly, no simple one, and we feel sure that it is difficult for Americans to place these events in the particular context of Italian history that is necessary if they are to be understood at all. Nonetheless, the evidence available still seems to indicate that a large percentage of the Communist votes are "protest" votes and that many of the most vocal Italian Communists are what are called "stomach Communists." Italy has achieved miracles of reconstruction since the war, but much more is needed. Is there nothing more that could be done from the outside to help her? Obviously any country where something like one-third of the voters consistently cast their ballot for the Communists is in a dangerous situation.

## "BUY THREE—RIDE FREE"

LIKE ITS counterparts in just about every city in the nation, the New York City Transit Authority has long been faced with more or less continuous financial crisis, but never before has the desperation of the city's transit situation been so nakedly revealed. New York's Transit Authority has just entered into a free coupon advertising scheme with the B. T. Babbitt soap company, whereby various soap products will be packaged with coupons redeemable for free rides on the city's subways or buses. It is hoped that the promotion campaign, which will reportedly cost the Babbitt Company a minimum of one million dollars, will win back thousands of riders the system has lost in recent years.

Pained citizens have already pointed out that the plan will not necessarily add any riders to the transit system and that it is a mistake for the city to redeem the coupons at face value because of inevitable handling and administrative expenses. Michael J. Quill, president of the Transport Workers Union, declared, "We are not going to work ourselves into a lather about this, but the authority should know that we will not be soft-soaped out of asking more money and additional time for the added duties placed on our members by this coupon plan."

These remarks make it sadly clear that New York's city fathers may have meant well in agreeing to this ingenious gimmick, but as it looks now, only Bab-O is likely to clean up.



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# Breaking the Stalemate

*"The NATO allies must at least think out and place before the bar of public opinion an alternative policy for Middle Europe"*

by HENRY S. REUSS

THE NATO alliance today suffers from what Walter Lippmann calls a "crisis of confidence." This is so because the people of Western Europe now recognize that massive retaliation cannot be a complete or satisfactory answer to the question of how to deter Communist aggression. Now that the Soviets have the power to destroy Washington or New York or Chicago with thermonuclear-armed rockets, the threat of the Strategic Air Command to bomb Moscow in retaliation for some local aggression, in the Middle East or in Asia or even in Europe, will not be taken entirely seriously.

To constitute a real deterrent to Russian aggression, NATO must have adequate strength on the ground, both in conventional and in limited atomic weapons. To provide for atomic defenses in Europe, the Eisenhower Administration has proposed legislation which will permit the United States to share with its allies certain of our atomic secrets and weapons. This proposal to share atomic secrets and weapons with present non-atomic powers marks a great divide in America's foreign policy. Such a sharing of weapons—with four, five, six or more nations—has several fateful consequences.

First, to move another step away from conventional weapons increases the chance that any war at all in Europe will be a nuclear war. Secondly, placing the atomic weapon in the hands of more countries increases the number of those who will have the capacity to trigger an atomic war. Thirdly, spreading atomic installations throughout Western Europe may induce Russia to do likewise among her satellites in Eastern Europe. And since Russia cannot trust the East Germans or the Czechs or the Poles or the Hungarians with such weapons, it means that the Red army will become an even more permanent part of the Eastern European landscape.

The proposal to share the atom bomb, therefore, must be considered not in isolation, but in the context of the West's entire foreign and military policy. As we rush onward over the great divide, the NATO allies must at least think out and place before the bar of public opinion an alternative policy for Middle Europe to what we have now. We must demonstrate that while we are preparing for the worst, we shall never cease working for a policy with some hope in it.

The West now has no alternative policy. In the United States, the Eisenhower Administration sought power six years ago with a promise to liberate the European areas under Russian sway. The 1952 Republican platform promised to replace the Democratic "negative, futile, and immoral policy of containment" with a program which would "set up strains and stresses within the captive world." Newspaper advertisements in the foreign language press showed a uniformed General Eisenhower swearing: "Upon my honor, before God, I will work for liberation."

In January, 1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles said he would "use the Voice of America to help stir discontent and to let the Poles, Czechs and others know that they have this country's support." He talked encouragingly of airdrops to aid such peoples. Then came a series of astonishing demonstrations that throughout Middle Europe the people were rejecting Soviet tyranny. Despite years of Communist indoctrination, despite the use of Soviet tanks and bayonets, the captive peoples of East Berlin and Poznan and Budapest demonstrated that they would never accept despotism as their final lot. But, confronted with the very liberation which its words had encouraged, the Administration did nothing but condemn the tyrant. "Liberation by airdrop" died in November 1956 when

Mr. Reuss, a member of the House of Representatives from Wisconsin, formerly served as deputy general counsel for the Marshall Plan.



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the last pathetic S.O.S. call for help from Radio Free Budapest went unanswered.

NO RESPONSIBLE leader in the West is proposing a war of liberation. That would be folly, and to promise it would be a cruel deception. But the West's rejection of the role of saber rattler does not mean that it need go to the other extreme and adopt the role of dazed and policyless bystander.

Yet today the West's "policy" for Middle Europe appears to be simply this: let the Russians withdraw from Eastern Germany and the other satellites, with no prior assurance that the countries thus liberated would not then arm to the teeth and become hostile. The hint of such assurances contained in the proposals of Anthony Eden at the Geneva Summit Conference in July 1955 has never been seriously accepted by the West, much less negotiated. Yet it should be evident that no Russian, Communist or not, who remembers the two World Wars will buy a proposal which ignores Russia's legitimate security interests.

What the West needs is a policy that seeks an end to the nightmare of Eastern Europe, a new order for these people whose hope for freedom in 1945 was dashed by the designs of aggressive Communism, a policy which comes to grips with the realities of our divided world, and which commends itself to the deep sense of justice which all peoples share.

A considerable number of Democratic Congressmen in the U.S. believe that the NATO allies should propose a settlement in Middle Europe, as an accompaniment to an all-out effort to strengthen NATO militarily, along some such lines as the following:

First, a troop withdrawal by Russian troops to Russia's historic boundaries, and by British, French, and United States troops to the west bank of the Rhine.

Second, a guarantee by Russia and NATO of free elections in both East and West Germany. As for the other Middle European states which would be freed from foreign armies, a declaration by the West that it will do all it can to achieve free elections and respect for human rights there, too.

Third, self-imposed arms limitations by the emerging states of Middle Europe, including a Germany united in freedom, as a step in a more general worldwide disarmament. Such limitations would be internationally policed, but would permit a level of defense forces so that these countries would not be a pushover for an aggressor. Prohibiting missiles and atomic weapons should be considered. As an interim measure, the use of a United Nations police force could be explored.

Fourth, guarantees from both NATO and Russia to resist aggression against Middle Europe.

Fifth, deemphasis on nationalism in Middle Europe, in favor of regional political and economic federation. With nationalism deemphasized, a solution for such festering sores as the trans-Oder-Neisse territories would be attainable.

All of this is quite a package. Certainly in most aspects of Western foreign policy, and particularly arms control policy, it is not wise to talk about package solutions. Instead, a step-by-step approach is much more likely to succeed in this imperfect world. But a settlement for Middle Europe has such inter-related elements, so likely to be misunderstood if stated piecemeal, and so likely to be ineffective or even dangerous if worked out on an atomized basis, that the package approach is essential, at least in formulating the matter.

Thinning out troops and armaments in Central Europe had better not be considered aside from reunification of East and West Germany by free elections. To have a free Germany and a Communist Germany facing each other, with Russian and Western troops withdrawn from their respective sides, would increase, not diminish, the chances of a conflict.

Similarly, a reunited Germany would solve little if no concurrent steps were taken to secure freedom for the satellites of Eastern Europe, and a settlement for the Oder-Neisse territorial problem. And it would be a tragedy to achieve the freeing up of Eastern Europe only to have it relapse backward into a morass of economic nationalism, excessive militarism, and political totalitarianism. Therefore, while the achievement of the proposal may come in phases and stages, its grand design needs to be inclusive.

IF SUCH a proposal were made, negotiated, and carried out, its advantages for the West would be obvious. Eighty million human beings now subject to Soviet tyranny would be free to shape their own destiny. Independently of the human beings involved, such a consummation would remove from Communism an area essential to its plans for world domination. Further, by placing hundreds of miles between Russian troops and NATO troops, it would reduce what is probably the greatest single daily threat of atomic war. Now I will be the first to concede that even the successful carrying out of the proposal would not result in a "disengagement" between East and West in the sense that all frictions and tensions will have been removed. The main antagonisms would still persist and remain to be dealt with. But each point of hostile contact that can be removed is a net gain.

These are the advantages of the proposal. What are the disadvantages? Several have been suggested: First. "It would mean the withdrawal of United States Ground and Air Forces from Europe to the United States, as George Kennan seems to suggest, and hence the end of NATO." The short answer to this is that it would mean nothing of the kind. There is plenty of room for America's present four ground divisions west of the Rhine, where, indeed, it is reported, they may be



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withdrawn in any event. Nor would it involve removal of American strategic bombing airbases. And it is hard to visualize much additional that American missile bases east of the Rhine could do over what they could do west of the Rhine.

Second. "It would permit a reunited Germany to be drawn into the Russian orbit." Here again, the proposal for a voluntarily imposed German self-limitation on armaments in no way suggests German disorientation from the West. A reunited Germany should be encouraged to participate fully in the Coal-Steel Community, the Council of Europe, Euratom, the Common Market, the European Payments Union. With its energy, it should be encouraged to take the lead in a new enterprise by the have nations to help develop the have-nots.

But what about the participation of a reunited Germany in NATO, if it wishes? So far, this right to participate has been an official article of faith for the West. On the merits, there would be nothing wrong with letting a reunited Germany participate in NATO subject to the three limitations inherent in the proposed settlement: no stationing of NATO troops east of the Rhine, a ceiling on Germany's military forces, and the nonavailability of these German forces to a peacetime NATO. This would leave of Germany's participation in NATO two main items: the NATO guarantee against aggression, and whatever political and economic "togetherness" arises from NATO membership. Perhaps these two items could be secured equally well without formal German NATO membership. Perhaps the government of Germany may become less insistent on such membership. Certainly if limited NATO participation by Germany were not made a *sine qua non,* a plausible although unsubstantial Russian talking point against the proposal would disappear.

As for the suggestion that Germany might want to form a new Rapallo arrangement or a new Molotov-Ribbentrop pact with Russia, the new Germany's attachment to Western free ideals is the best guarantee against this happening. Indeed, there is nothing to prevent Western Germany from such an arrangement with Russia today, if it wanted it. The best additional guaranty that a desertion to Russia will not come about lies in creating a belt of independent states between Germany and Russia.

Third. "It would hurt NATO's defense strategy by depriving the West of a battleground in Western Germany, and of the West German Army." With the reduction of British, French and American forces in West Germany, it is not clear how much is left of NATO's forward strategy. But in any event, acceptance of the proposal would mean that a Russian aggression would have to start, not from East Berlin or Mecklenburg or Thuringia, as at present, but from several hundred miles to the east. Here the defense forces of the liberated states could provide at least a temporary roadblock against the Russians which does not exist today.

It is by no means clear that the twelve West German divisions which now constitute its NATO ceiling would be lost to the West under the proposal. The self-defense forces of a united Germany, even with a drastic arms limitation, might well be not far from this number of divisions—not to mention the absence from the area of the twenty-two first-rate Soviet divisions now in East Germany.

Fourth. "The Russians might break their promise, and not withdraw their troops." Secretary of State Dulles, who is fond of reiterating the sorry tale of Russian perfidy, apparently takes this view. It is true that Russia has violated pledge after pledge where it has served its purpose to do so. It is equally true that where there is present a self-enforcing provision, such as in the current Korean armistice line, the Communist agreement has been kept. Obviously, under the present proposal, if the Russians cheat on withdrawal, the West would cease its withdrawal.

Fifth. "The Russians might reenter their former satellite states." True, they might, although it seems absurd for them to withdraw from where they are now comfortably ensconced, only to have to fight their way west again the hard way. If they entertain the idea of re-entry, they could perhaps be discouraged by the clearest kind of statement by NATO that violation of the borders of Middle Europe would be a cause for war. A further insurance against Russian re-entry, whether by aggression or by subversion, would be the determination of the countries of Middle Europe to resist with their national forces. In short, it is an odd argument that we should reject a proposal that the Russians go back to Russia on the ground that once they are back home, they might come charging out again.

Sixth. "The Russians might turn their attentions to Asia, Africa, and the Middle East." Undoubtedly, they would. But their attentions are pretty well turned in that direction already.

IF THE proposal has so many advantages for the West, and is so free of boobytraps, how can anyone expect Russia to accept it? Well, at various times Communist spokesmen have indicated a certain receptivity to similar ideas. On November 17, 1956, shortly after



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the Hungarian uprising, then-Premier Bulganin offered to negotiate the European question on the basis of mutual troop withdrawals. Later, in a television interview, First Secretary Khrushchev espoused similar talk of mutual disengagement. Then there is the so-called Rapacki Plan, for a nuclear-free zone in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East and West Germany. None of this Communist talk has ever been tested by serious negotiation. All of it has been contradicted by negative talk at different times. And all of it is no doubt replete with diplomatic pitfalls.

But let us assume that the chances of Russia's accepting the proposal are at present close to nil. Is it nevertheless not important that the West lay before the world, including Russia, a proposal that a reasonable and patriotic Russian, freed of megalomaniac fantasies, might adopt?

Surely the proposal answers Russia's legitimate interests. It would reduce the threat of an atomic war which Russia should want no more than we. At Budapest, the satellites showed that they are ready to turn their guns east, not west. In return for getting out of the sagging satellites with some face-saving, Russia could conserve some of her strength for making the Russian people prosperous, which, being human, they wish to be. Insurance against the setting-up of heavily armed and hostile states on Russia's borders could provide a real measure of military security. And economic internationalism in Middle Europe would assure Russia of a trading area very much in her interest. Indeed, the proposal has such genuine advantages for Russia's legitimate interests that we need to remind ourselves that our prime object is not making things difficult for Russia but producing a peaceful world.

But making a just proposal by the West is necessary even if we conclude that there is at the moment no chance that the Russians will accept it. We cannot remain silent on the kind of Middle Europe that we would like to see emerge from the long nightmare of Communism. For, once known, our vision of a free, peaceful and humane order in Middle Europe can begin to mold events. It can give encouragement to the captive peoples. And it can hasten the day when more reasonable men can come to power in Russia, by giving them, too, a goal.

MAKING a constructive proposal, even though it is rejected out of hand, would be useful for an additional reason. The best way of strengthening NATO is to convince America's European allies that it has something more in mind than simply bases for atomic missiles on their soil. Throughout NATO there is now a deep disillusion. In Great Britain, the articulate leaders of the Labor opposition—Hugh Gaitskell, Harold Wilson, Dennis Healey—are pushing vigorously for a proposal differing only in degree from that here outlined. The Conservative government has hesitated to say yes or no to it, although many individual Tories, such as Lord St. Oswald in the House of Lords, are vigorous partisans of the proposal.

In Germany, Social Democrats like Mayor Willy Brandt of West Berlin, independents like Wilhelm W. Schuetz, editor of *Aussenpolitik,* and even C.D.U. leaders like Bundestag President Eugen Gerstenmaier, are considering various aspects of a settlement. Again, the government of Chancellor Adenauer, while clearly and correctly insisting on the reunification in freedom of the two Germanies as a condition of security arrangements, has by no means ruled out the suggestion of self-imposed troop withdrawals and arms limitations. The main concession required would be a German recognition that these steps could come *prior to,* although as a first step toward, a more general disarmament. It is difficult to conceive of any West German Government's opposing freedom for the East Germans because it refuses to consider an arms limitation that the rest of the West thinks desirable. In Norway, Denmark, France, and elsewhere, voices for a new NATO policy are heard more and more.

NATO needs leadership, not the repetition of tired policies and tired slogans. A proposal like that made here becomes more timely than ever because the West seems drawn inexorably toward a summit meeting. If and when the West evolves a constructive position for Middle Europe, and if and when preliminary negotiations disclose some hope of success, a summit meeting could make sense. But it does not make sense to send President Eisenhower to parley at the summit when the West has no agreed position to negotiate from, nor common objectives to negotiate for. Such a summit conference would almost inevitably result either in another smashing Russian propaganda victory or in dangerous concessions on our part.

If there is to be a summit conference, NATO must construct a positive proposal for Middle Europe. If we succeed, we will have moved a little way toward peace. If we fail, the West can at least go forward on its gloomy course with its unity fortified for having made the effort.

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## APPEALS FOR INDIA

Father A. H. Ravalico, S.D.B., needs $300 to transport American-donated rice up the Brahmaputra River to Assam and Manipur, where famine has broken out. Donations may be sent % Salesian Missions, 148 Main Street, New Rochelle, N.Y. Sister M. Bernardine of Jesus, a Carmelite nun about to return to India, plans to open home economics departments in two colleges there. Gifts—sewing machines, stoves, projectors, refrigerators, etc.—can be sent, % Alvernia High School, 3900 North Lawndale Av., Chicago 18, Ill.



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*Will California be the only state to tax church-related elementary and secondary schools?*

# Trouble in California

by TED LE BERTHON

WHETHER California will regain the dubious uniqueness it long held, up to 1951, of being the only State in the Union to tax church-related and other private elementary and secondary schools, is to be decided in the State general elections in November.

This decision was forced upon the voters when a group calling itself Californians for Public Schools qualified a deceptively worded initiative constitutional amendment for the ballot. And spearheading the campaign to reimpose taxation on these schools are Scottish Rite Masons, Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (P.O.A.U.), and clergymen of many major Protestant denominations, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Unitarian ministers apparently dominating the leadership.

Their target obviously is the Catholic schools, which make up sixty per cent of California's private, nonprofit institutions of less than collegiate grade, with eighty-two per cent of the total enrollment.

A more candid designation for those out to re-tax these schools would be Californians for Public Schools Only. They timed their measure well to exploit a gubernatorial race which helps them quicken old religious animosities. The Republican candidate for Governor is U. S. Senator William F. Knowland, a Methodist and Scottish Rite Mason. The Democratic gubernatorial candidate is Edmund G. ("Pat") Brown, a Catholic who for the past eight years has been State Attorney General. Those who "view with alarm" parochial schools are equally concerned that Mr. Brown shall not become the first Catholic elected Governor in 108 years.

The presumption in California, until Mr. Brown's candidacy, was that no Catholic (or Jew, for that matter) could possibly be elected Governor. No Jew has ever held the office. California's first Governor, Peter H. Burnett, elected in 1850, was a convert shortly before that to Catholicism. California's twelfth Governor, Romualdo Pacheco, was a Catholic, but was not elected to the office. He *had* been elected Lieutenant-Governor in 1874. He succeeded to the Governorship on the resignation, two years later, of Governor Newton Booth, but he did not run for re-election in 1878.

That, however, was a long time ago. Twenty-nine of California's thirty-one Governors have been Protestants and Masons, and the same mentality that seeks to re-tax church-related schools is out to preserve this "American tradition." Thus there is considerable man-in-the-street speculation as to whether Mr. Brown's candidacy will help or harm the cause of the mostly Catholic private schools.

But there are other factors that may well bring victory to Mr. Brown and defeat for school tax reimposition. For one thing, Mr. Knowland is running on a "right-to-work" platform. He became the Republican party's gubernatorial choice because many financiers and industrialists want a "right-to-work" law. Spring Street (Los Angeles) and Montgomery Street (San Francisco) purse-string holders refused to back incumbent Republican Governor Goodwin J. Knight for re-election, charging he had been "too soft on labor." This forced Mr. Knight to retire in favor of Mr. Knowland, albeit, reluctantly, and to run instead for the U.S. Senate seat Mr. Knowland will vacate. Mr. Knight has continued to condemn "right-to-work," both on principle and because he declares Mr. Knowland's espousal of it to be a ticklish political hazard. Incumbent Republican Lieutenant-Governor Harold J. Powers, candidate for re-election as Mr. Knowland's running mate, is also strenuously opposing "right-to-work," as are many Republicans and all Democrats running for election or re-election to the State Senate and Assembly.

Mr. Brown is vigorously campaigning against "right-to-work" and has been unanimously endorsed by both the A.F.L. and C.I.O. which have not yet completed merger in California. He also has virtually all small farmers supporting him, because he favors continuance of the fifty-six-year-old Federal 160-acre limitation law, whereby water from a Federal reclamation project is denied any individual owning more than that many acres. Mr. Knowland, who wants this law amended to provide various exemptions, has the backing of California's large scale agriculturalists, who although only

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five per cent of the state's farmers already own about seventy-five per cent of all the cultivated land.

MANY CATHOLICS think most of those voting for Mr. Brown because he opposes "right-to-work" and favors the 160-acre limitation will also vote against reimposition of taxation on the private schools. But, in view of religious prejudices not yet calculable, this may be wishful thinking.

However, a seemingly amazing factor may keep the 1,076 private schools, 643 of them Catholic and only thirty-nine non-sectarian, tax-free. Almost all California daily newspapers are editorially combatting tax reimposition. Moreover, this stand reflects the official position of both the Republican and Democratic parties and of most candidates for office, including Mr. Knowland and Mr. Brown.

Offhand, such approximate unanimity on this school tax issue seems incredible in view of much vaunted Masonic power, always to be reckoned with in California politics. It seems the more amazing when it is considered that Catholics—whose schools would be most hurt by tax reimposition—constitute only twenty-seven per cent of the State's population. Furthermore, only four of the twenty-six major Protestant church bodies conduct private schools. Finally, the Masonic brethren are tremendously active in this issue. I happened on a sheaf of photostatic copies of letters from Worshipful Masters of lodges up and down the State, all urging members to give immediately and generously to California for Public Schools, to fight "the menace of parochial schools."

The politically innocent, meaning the average voter, might conclude that leaders of both political parties and most daily newspaper publishers abhor tarnishing the fair name of California with any sort of religious war. For instance, most editorials to date in the big dailies (and the Catholic weeklies too) are conspicuous by the absence of the dread words "Catholic" and "parochial." What most often is held to be at stake is whether "private, non-profit schools" shall continue tax-free in California, just as they are in all other forty-seven States.

Most metropolitan dailies and all archdiocesan and diocesan weeklies have simply cited the democratic right of parents to send their children to either public or private schools. Both have pointed out that *all* parents, including those whose children attend private schools, pay taxes to support the public school system. Both have also argued that if the 304,832 private school pupils had to be educated in public schools the over-all tuition costs alone (teachers' salaries, books, etc.), would put an additional annual burden of $105,-471,872 on the taxpayers. Rarely is it revealed that 251,684 of these children are attending Catholic schools, with only 53,148 enrolled in all the others.

Moreover, it is shown that if *all* private school pupils had to transfer to public schools, it would also cost the taxpayers some $350,000,000 more for the building and equipping of the additional public schools that would be needed. Thus, the argument runs, the very existence of the private schools is saving the taxpayers astronomical sums, in as much as the State treasury, via school tax exemption, lost only a mere $1,800,400 last year.

The figures are correct, but they summon up a dark and improbable picture of tax reimposition driving the private schools out of existence. Most of these schools operated long prior to 1951, during years when they *were* taxed. Certainly it is hard to imagine California's five Ordinaries, in the event of tax reimposition, shutting down the Catholic schools and turning the pupils over to the public school system. But graver and more far-reaching possibilities underly the vigorous fight against tax reimposition. P.O.A.U. has promised, if the voters favor re-taxing the private schools, to carry the fight to tax church-related schools into every other State in the Union.

However overly dramatized are the editorials I have mentioned, their appeal to the taxpayer is far sounder than that made in news releases emanating from Californians for Public Schools. That group insists that tax exemption of "parochial schools" is preventing a much needed expansion of California's public school system. That is balderdash. The tax money lost is a piddling amount when it is realized that it cost about a billion dollars last year to educate an estimated 2,815,000 pupils in the public elementary and high schools. Some dailies have editorially pointed this out, and several have described the proponents of tax reimposition as a fanatical minority. They deserve being called fanatics, but they may not be a minority. Whether only a minority of Californians will vote against their measure in November remains to be seen.

Anti-Catholic prejudice cannot be wholly disregarded. For one thing, most Protestant denominations in California have never built or maintained private schools. Many Protestants and all secularists have long thought of public schools as their very own. Too, of California's 1,076 private schools, 643 are Catholic. Of the others, 390 are Protestant, four Jewish, thirty-nine non-sectarian. But only four major Protestant bodies out of twenty-six run private schools. The Seventh Day Adventists have 151; the Lutherans, 103; the Episcopalians, twenty-two; and one branch of the Baptist Church, twenty-one. Most of the others are conducted by minor sects. The Catholic Church obviously has far more to win or lose in November than any other religious body.

This brings us to another point. Why *do* most California dailies place such stress on their approval of continued tax exemption for these schools?



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TO BEGIN WITH, most are Republican dailies, which have eighty-six per cent of the total circulation of all the State's dailies, and they are also totally devoted to Senator Knowland and "right-to-work." Most of them have accorded relatively slight space to Mr. Brown's campaign. When they mention him editorially, they assail him as "the captive of the big labor bosses" or in comparable terms. But Mr. Knowland is held up as the sincere champion of rank-and-file workers, a shining knight eager to deliver them from "racketeering labor leaders." Also, Mr. Brown is frequently described as lacking Mr. Knowland's political stature and presumed large and sound knowledge of national and international affairs. Too, Mr. Knowland has been dubbed "Mr. Integrity" and Mr. Brown referred to as "just another machine politician."

This attacking and belittling of Mr. Brown has offended many Catholics, regardless of their political affiliation, especially as no question has been raised as to either his integrity or competence in past years. Moreover, his following is a most affectionate one. Many think of "Pat" Brown as another "Al" Smith, and these include some prominent Protestants and Jews as well as Catholics. Whereas Mr. Knowland is aloof, diffident, almost humorless, and a poor speaker, Mr. Brown is warm, witty, and, as one political commentator put it: "He becomes 'Pat' to virtually anyone to whom he was introduced five minutes before." While not a Websterian orator, his political speeches carry a ring of simple, good-humored conviction.

This brings us closer to an understanding of the editorial support of the Republican press of private church-related schools. In the opinion of most politically astute Catholics with whom I've talked, it is a real desire to appease and assuage Catholic voters offended by the attacks on Mr. Brown in the only way possible. After all, Catholic schools are very dear to most Catholic hearts. Mr. Knowland is shown as upholding their right to continue tax-free; therefore he must be a pretty good fellow after all.

Of course, what the Republican papers do not mention is that in 1952 Mr. Brown, although knowing he would run for re-election in 1954, stuck his political neck way out by constantly championing tax exemption for the private schools, whereas Mr. Knowland is comparatively a "Johnny-come-lately" in this regard. But the Republican press *is* aware that the gubernatorial race will be a bitter one. Mr. Brown is a formidable vote-getter, and the Republican press does not want to alienate any possible votes for Mr. Knowland, including those of the State's twenty-seven per cent Catholics.

TO UNDERSTAND the school tax issue fully, one needs to know that California, up to 1901, taxed all private educational institutions. That year it granted tax exemption solely to Stanford University. This glaring favoritism caused such continuous indignation that in 1914 tax exemption was granted all private colleges and universities. They are still tax exempt.

For a century, California taxed all private elementary and secondary schools. It was not until 1951 that the State legislature voted (33 to 3 in the Senate, 75 to 0 in the Assembly) to exempt them. Governor Earl Warren signed the exemption into law.

Fierce protests followed. Adversaries of tax exemption qualified a referendum measure for the ballot at the interim elections of 1952, asking the voters to nullify the legislative act. Some three million votes were cast, with the private schools winning out by an approximate 75,000 plurality.

But the stubborn contestants of tax exemption won an appellate court ruling, two to one, the following year, holding the legislative enactment of 1951 had violated the California constitution. In 1955, however, the California Supreme Court, four to three, upheld the exemption's constitutionality. A year later the U.S. Supreme Court reviewed this decision but refused jurisdiction, and it looked as if school tax exemption had come to stay, that California was at last safely in line with all other forty-seven states in this regard.

Yet the battle is now on all over again because the same Masons, P.O.A.U. leaders and Protestant clergymen thought up the device of amending the California constitution. They have come up with some cunning wording: "Taxation of School Property of Religious and other Non-profit Organizations: Initiative Constitutional Amendment. Amends Section 1c of Article VIII of the State Constitution by providing that the property authorized exempted by said section shall not include any property used or owned, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, for any religious or other school or school purposes of less than collegiate grade unless used, owned and held exclusively for the blind, mentally retarded or physically handicapped. Does not affect exemptions granted by other sections of the Constitution."

The continued tax exemption of schools for the blind, mentally retarded and physically handicapped that the amendment would permit is a tricky attempt to catch the votes of the sentimental and uninformed. There are not a handful of such private schools in California, almost all such children being taught and otherwise cared for in public institutions.

It bears repeating that a more accurate name for Californians for Public Schools would be Californians for Public Schools Only. Theirs is the mentality that regards church-related schools as "un-American" and "unconstitutional," confusing totalitarian uniformity with that unity of diverse elements that is the strength of a democratic society and the hallmark of a free people.



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# THE LOST LEADERS

EARLY IN June Diana Trilling wrote an intriguing short piece in the *Herald Tribune* called "Impotence Through Indifference." Noting the general American apathy about the present crisis in France, Mrs. Trilling stated that "our political inertia becomes steadily more marked." For a decade or more now, she said, it has been almost impossible to get Americans truly excited about events abroad. The reaction to the Hungarian uprising, for example, aroused "only the most transitory emotions of admiration for the victims and outrage at the oppressors."

She contrasted that with the high feeling and intense involvement the intellectual world of America knew during the Spanish Civil War. Then the fate of the Loyalists' troops was "the whole absorbing object of our educated feeling."

Mrs. Trilling does not consider the problem of the unthinkable third world war, which I believe makes all the difference here. Rather she accounts for this difference by the fact that the Spanish Loyalists were fighting "fascism"—her word—whereas the Hungarian freedom fighters were resisting Communism. "Our supposedly most enlightened classes in this country," she explained, "still make a quite automatic and unconscious distinction between fascism and communism."

There is a history behind this. In the past the "enlightened classes" identified the proclaimed "moral objectives" of Communism with their own best hopes for America; in fact they derived their own political morality from the criteria set down by Communist propagandists. The Soviet image exercised a "subtle authority" over their moral-intellectual lives.

With the great disillusionment of the postwar period, some kind of moral vacuum was created. Having had the brutal truth about the Soviet system forced upon them, the "enlightened" felt impotent; "woven deep into the fabric of our contemporary political morality, so deep that we have forgotten its source, is the need to minimize or blink or extenuate the Soviet reality. . . ."

I think I would agree with some of the insights in Mrs. Trilling's thesis, though she has not given any consideration to the differences in the world (and the nature of war) between 1937 and 1957. I am not sure, though, just who she would include in the "enlightened classes." I suppose she is thinking of the kind of people she knows best—those who speak and write on social-literary-political questions and keep the fires of controversy burning, those who are the mainstay of the little magazines and butcher-paper weeklies and think they are "selling out" when they go to work for Henry Luce, those who pass on the egghead books of their personal friends and enemies in the review media, those who have a political "past," either as youthful members of the Communist Party or as dissident Marxists in one of the Socialist sects.

This is a small but highly articulate group of people who have never been shy about identifying themselves as America's "intellectuals" or accepting such designations as Mrs. Trilling uses—"enlightened classes," guardians of America's political conscience, etc. They have had a strong influence on the nation's thinking. Still, I do not believe they are now, or ever have been, as influential as they have been supposed, and have supposed themselves, to be.

Popular opinion always has and still does sustain the Judeo-Christian tradition as the substance of American culture; the group I am thinking of, even if it is not the group Mrs. Trilling has in mind, has been shakily post-Christian all along. Over the years they have turned to Marx, to Freud, to Science writ large. At the moment they do not seem to know quite where to turn, since each of their Messiahs for one reason or another has been found wanting.

But while they have floundered, most Americans have been tied, if somewhat uncertainly, to the tradition of the West. They have never shared the furious contemporaneity of the "enlightened classes." They have known principles older than either Marx or Freud: principles learned in Sunday school, perhaps, or, *vide* Mr. Eisenhower, from the copy books they used in public school. They have not thought of themselves as the keepers of a Conscience, political or otherwise. Still, it did not take a great revelation to convince them that the Soviet dictatorship was something less than a moral image. They have always rejected Communism, even in the dark days of depression when they did not know where else to turn.

They have not always been shrewd in their political analysis; they are eternally sluggish and inert; they have been frequently misled by demagogues who used the language of the West while ignoring its very substance. They are not perfect by any means. But if I had to choose between their instinctive moral sense and the highly structured political "morality" of the rootless "enlightened classes," I would chose the former, not because of any mystical faith in The People, but because of a deep faith in the tradition of the West and the knowledge that this tradition resides in the people. Mrs. Trilling's "intellectuals" and "enlightened classes" can still nurture that tradition and enrich it. I would like to see them do it. But their early revolt against tradition amounted to a revolt against the people themselves. It should have been no surprise then when the people did not follow.

JOHN COGLEY.



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# THE STAGE

## THE ROAD TO THE ISLES

I KNOW a Galway lady, born and bred, who was taken once, by a son full of his own sentiment and romance, to Robert Flaherty's *Man of Aran,* that documentary of the harsh life of the Western isles, and the classic beauties and braveries of human existence. She watched those spare images, drawn against an emptied sky and constant sea, of men with bitten profiles, and their women, shawled and silent, ceaselessly heaving great baskets of kelp across the broken shore. She watched, indeed, until she had quite had it, and bolted from her seat, announcing loudly: "There isn't that much seaweed in all of Ireland!"

She made, shall we say, her point, and it is one to which we are prompted, not irreverently yet not infrequently, by plays of John Millington Synge: there can't be that much lyricism in the tongue of man. Synge's plays, and his exemplary role, have always enjoyed a glamour and cultural interest rather in excess of their strict esthetic merit: that glamour of the last radiance of a folk art not yet extinguished by industrialism, and an interest which issues from the comment (implicit) Synge's labor and example make on the place of drama in the total culture of a modern society. There is every evidence that the Irish dramatist was indifferent to these wider issues of a world in travail; none to claim for him more authority than that of the artist working out his vocation in the resistant stuff of history and time. At the end of the last century, Synge left, one remembers, the *salons* of Huysmans and Mallarmé and, bidden by Yeats, went to the Western isles to "express a life that had never been expressed." All of his work is a dilation on that moment of "exquisite satisfaction" he felt in moving away from civilization towards Aran, in a "rude canvas canoe that had served primitive races since men first went on the sea." All of his love is for that drowned ceremony of grace and innocence Yeats laments again and again in the great elegies: "We were the last romantics—chose for theme/Traditional sanctity and loveliness. . . ."

To his tragic ambitions—"Deirdre of the Sorrows" and "Riders to the Sea"—Synge brought magnificences of grief and ideal passion, elemental motifs of nature and the acceptance of mortality. His wry comedies—notably "The Playboy of the Western World"—are full of morning pungency, profligate in the ease with which they sketch genre pictures of a roiling, sly and genially brutal life. What expresses this twinned vision everywhere is a language unique among the artifacts of the twentieth century: the folk speech of a rural, Catholic peasantry brought, by the love of an urban, Protestant romantic, to the precision and finality of art. Beyond any major dramatist of his time, Synge recklessly commits the total burden of his theater to *tone.* His sense of character, or complex human personality, was negligible; his moral sensibility strangely —shall one say, deliberately?—unsophisticated. He left to language the whole task, sought to make it ever copious and rich, "fully flavoured as a nut or apple": and for this, nothing served so well as the flux and rhythm and dilation of a profound lyricism.

It is ironic to note, as Mr. Ronald Peacock does in his excellent study of Synge in *The Poet in the Theatre,* that the very theme of "The Playboy" should itself be lyricism: lyricism as the glory and snare of the imagination. Christy Mahon, the poor, spindle-shanked, diddling trifler, goes into a destiny on the grand tale of having killed his da, creates an identity where none had been, becomes indeed the *only* Playboy of the Western World, by the luxury and love of fine words, the "poet's talking." The imagination becomes for him a liberator, but for the Mayo peasants, a reckless fantasy upon which they turn in fickleness. "The Playboy" embodies, then, not only a wry fable of the artist and his audience, but a very considerable statement about the nature of reality and illusion: a statement all the more provocative for its confinement to dramatic terms of language and the imagination, and its indifference to the actualities of moral experience (as in "The Misanthrope"). Synge may not have moved so far from Mallarmé as he had thought.

Yet there is a limitation to Synge's work—specifically to this ambitious and brilliant "serious" comedy of "The Playboy"—one is hard put to define. Max Beerbohm stressed the exotic as the source of our greatest pleasure in Synge, and indeed exoticism—of color, of locale, supremely of language—gives these plays their singular charm. But charm it is only: there seem to me few possibilities of any profound extension or definition of life in "The Playboy": the scale, if not the material, is somehow provincial. Nor is Synge's vein of keening folk lyricism open to limitless exploration. The folk in art has its own bright zest and tenderness, but these stop at the threshold of complexity: insistently maintained, they weary, as the rhythms and rhetoric of "The Playboy" not seldom do. Synge had the greatness and austerity to labor at giving his theater its remarkable unity of style, a magnificent enterprise of language; he had, beyond that, the taste and love to allow his people their racial uniqueness, their quality of "what is superb and wild in reality." —Yet his plays seem as exotic as their remote and windy life. To the degree that Hopkins is a great poet with no directing impact on either the consciousness or craft of his heirs in poetry, so is Synge a great dramatist whose work has extended neither the sensibility, subject matter nor forms of the English theater.



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"He is," as Mr. Peacock justly puts it, "a fortuitous visitor in our sky, shedding a brilliant and decorative lustre, but no fertilizing warmth."

The last infirmity of a theater such as Synge's is to demand of its players a total commitment to the word: what Giraudoux, for example, required, and got, from Jouvet. The Irish Players, who have revived "The Playboy" at the elegant new Seven Arts Center, may be admirable actors, but they have yet to begin to solve the dramatic problem of Synge's language: I have more readily understood plays spoken in French. Lyricism in art is not enhanced by personal egotism or insistence; it flows best with least distraction—the lines of expression must be simple and pure. The Irish Players succumb too easily to the picturesque and the raw; indeed, I hesitate to imagine what an impression of verbal and dramatic incoherence this performance would make on an audience new to Synge. Finally, while nothing is more difficult to represent in theater than racial spirit and tone, I am indignant at the absence, from this production of a quintessential Irish play, of that quality which even one hour at the Shannon airport would make plain: the large, free dignity of the Irish, their elegance and poise in life. (*At the Seven Arts Center.*) RICHARD HAYES.

# THE SCREEN

## WHOLESOME AND OTHERWISE

AS REFRESHING as the great outdoors is "The Proud Rebel," a new film handsomely produced by Samuel Goldwyn, Jr. It has an interesting post-Civil War story about a Southern officer who, on his way to Minnesota where he hopes an operation will cure his mute son, stops to work on an Illinois farm run by a very determined woman. And it also has Ted McCord's stunning Technicolor photography, which, although it was taken in Utah, vividly visualizes the flat open spaces and lovely sky of the mid-west. The rich farm country and the outdoor sets are perfect for the warm father-son theme, and they accentuate by contrast the villainous attempts of sheepherders to bring harm to these good people.

Perhaps Alan Ladd was able to add tenderness to his usual stoic portrayal because his own son, David, plays the role of the mute boy, or perhaps some of David's touching portrayal rubs off on the father. In any case they make a fine team, and with Olivia de Havilland, as the hard-working farmer whose run-down place is greatly improved by Alan's efforts, they present an effective front against gossipers who are shocked at Alan's staying at Olivia's farm and against the villains who want to run their sheep through Olivia's barley fields. Director Michael Curtiz, who has on the whole done a good job, allows these sheep ranchers to get too vicious in their villainy, but his intention is to add some rough-and-tumble to an otherwise cerebral plot. There are appealing scenes between the mannish farm woman and the mute boy and between this boy and his father, who sells the boy's wonderful sheep dog in order to get funds for the operation and trip to Rochester. Indirectly this remarkable dog leads to several fights between Ladd and the villains (led by Dean Jagger). The climax, which raises a delicate point of ethics, is very exciting and gives the boy a shock that does more for him than the operation in Minnesota. "The Proud Rebel" is the kind of rousing movie that adults can enjoy and enjoy taking youngsters to.

ALSO WHOLESOME, although it has to do with city mores and city dirt, is "Rooney," an English film that has much charm and thoughtfulness, as do so many minor English movies. Under George Pollock's good direction, the fine actor John Gregson plays a Dublin hurley player and dustman (garbage collector to us) as well as a confirmed bachelor who wastes a lot of his energies escaping marriage. What happens to him when he takes a room in a house run by a calculating widow (Marie Kean) is very amusing indeed, especially as Gregson's desirability to the widow and her daughter (June Thorburn) changes with his rise from a lowly dustman to a chief contestant in the All-Ireland Hurley Final. Adding to the romantic interest in this typically feminine and Irish household is Muriel Pavlow as an orphaned relative who serves as the family drudge but is greatly appreciated by the ailing granda' (Barry Fitzgerald) and eventually by Gregson.

George H. Brown's good production includes funny and touching scenes—of a wedding, of Granda's death and later the reading of his crazy will, and finally of Rooney in a hurley game, which you'll find pretty rough in case you've never seen one. The plot of "Rooney" is rather thin and audiences will find themselves ahead of its conclusion, but the picture has a great deal of pleasantry and warmth, and the characterizations are a delight—especially Gregson as the naive Benedick, Muriel Pavlow as the outspoken Cinderella, Marie Kean as the sharp-tongued gossip, Noel Purcell as Gregson's wise and good friend, and several others playing relatives and friends.

AS SORDID as "Rooney" and "The Proud Rebel" are soaring is "High School Confidential!" a melodrama that decries certain evils in teenagers' activities but sinks to the level of sensationalism. Russ Tamblyn, a likable and talented young actor, turns up as a



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student at the Santa Bello high school and wins the admiration of the others with his fast jive talk and the way he handles a switchblade knife, sasses the teachers and drives a hot-rod. Teacher Jan Sterling, who believes there's no such thing as a bad boy, tries to understand Russ and gain his confidence—but it all seems like a lost cause in this school where the marijuana traffic is heavy and where the students behave like the juvenile delinquents in scandal sheets rather than like real people. Smartalecky and popular Russ has no trouble in winning Diane Jergens, a marijuana addict, from John Drew Barrymore, who sells the stuff. As the picture progresses on its horrible way, including the ludicrous scene in which Russ's "aunt" (Mamie Van Doren) tries to seduce the boy, you discover that Russ is working for the F.B.I. or some government agency trying to fight the narcotics racket in high schools. By this time, however, you've seen everything. With its youthful cast and hep talk, "High School Confidential!" may unfortunately attract young people.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## "PROTESTANT-CATHOLIC-JEW"

Madison, N. J.

TO THE EDITORS: I've only just gone through my backlog of Commonweals and read John Cogley's piece, "Those Other Americans," in the April 18th issue. Mr. Cogley begins his last paragraph with the following sentences: "The 1960 election may be the first big test for Will Herberg's thesis that America is no longer simply a 'Protestant' but a 'Catholic-Protestant-Jewish' country. It is going to be interesting to see how the thesis stands up."

By and large, with certain qualifications, I would go along with this comment. The qualifications are:

1) My formula is not "Catholic-Protestant-Jew," as Mr. Cogley gives it, but "Protestant-Catholic-Jew." The order is important both historically and in regard to contemporary religio-social structure. Though ours is becoming a "three-religion country," there is a definite order of precedence among the three religious "partners," and this order is important in all social and political calculations.

2) Secondly, I do not say that America has already become, fully and completely, a "three-religion country." I say that this is the present most significant tendency: "America is *being transformed* from a Protestant into a 'three-religion' country. . . ." This process is obviously proceeding at different rates, and has reached different stages, in different parts of the country. Here regional considerations, among others, are important as qualifications.

3) In the third place, I never meant to imply that this process—the transformation of America into a "three-religion" country—necessarily makes for the *alleviation* of intergroup tensions. Obviously, the older Protestants, who in their own lifetime have experienced this change, are not going to be very happy about it; in fact, they are embittered, feeling "dispossessed" and "surrounded" by Catholics (and Jews). The younger people, who have grown up in the new situation, tend to regard it as normal, right, and proper: "After all, we're all Americans. . . ." They evince a much friendlier attitude to Catholics and Jews. On their part, Catholics and Jews exhibit the same differentiation according to "age group." (It is not age but cultural formation, however, that is is decisive.) During the transitional period, therefore—and this transitional period may last for some decades—the impact of the transformation of America into a "three-religion" country upon intergroup relations is likely to be quite complicated, and to vary from region to region.

But my real reason for writing is to call attention to the fact that we *already* have some evidence of the kind Mr. Cogley has in mind to test my hypothesis. In June 1956, the American Institute of Public Opinion published the results of a survey based on the following question: "If your party nominated a generally well-qualified man for the presidency this year, and he happened to be a Catholic, would you vote for him?"

The breakdown of responses, compared to the results of similar surveys made in 1940 and 1955, turns out to be very interesting:

| | *1940* | *1955* | *1956* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 62% | 69% | 73% |
| No | 31 | 23 | 22 |
| No Opinion | 7 | 8 | 5 |

*By Age Group (1956)*

| | *21–29* | *30–49* | *50 and over* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 83% | 79% | 62% |
| No | 14 | 17 | 31 |
| No Opinion | 3 | 4 | 7 |

*By Regions (1956)*

| | *East* | *Midwest* | *South* | *Far West* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 81% | 74% | 59% | 75% |
| No | 15 | 21 | 35 | 20 |
| No Opinion | 4 | 5 | 6 | 5 |

I think you will agree that this survey tends to bear out my theory (the first two tables are the significant ones). There is much other information to the same effect, some of which I quote in my book (e.g., p. 263, note 3). But, of course, as Mr. Cogley says, the 1960 election could prove very instructive.

WILL HERBERG.



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# Proust's Invisible Vocation

by MARTIN TURNELL

IN FRANCE the study of great writers tends to develop into a minor industry. These industries have their ups and downs which depend on the amount of unpublished material available, and the attitude of private collectors who own manuscripts. They can be kept going by artificial means. When the unpublished material dries up, you fall back on letters to the writers from his friends, or start to re-edit already perfect texts. The Proust industry was down to a trickle of badly edited spinsterish letters—Mr. Samuel Beckett spoke acidly in an early essay on Proust of "the garrulous old dowager of the Letters"—when M. Bernard de Fallois gave it new life by the discovery and publication of two important early works. *Contre Sainte-Beuve,* now translated into English and published together with a selection of Proust's miscellaneous criticism under the title *Marcel Proust on Art and Literature* (Meridian. $5.), is a more impressive and a more exciting book than *Jean Santeuil* and seems to provide the final link in the chain which leads from *Pleasures and Regrets*—Proust's early collection of stories—to *Remembrance of Things Past.*

Miss Sylvia Townsend Warner's translation is an excellent piece of work, but it was a mistake to translate all the verse quotations and tuck the French originals away in the notes at the end of the volume instead of printing them on the same page. This produces ludicrous effects, as when some of Proust's more rapturous comments on Baudelaire are followed by English versions which give no conception of the originals.

Although *Jean Santeuil* contains material which eventually found its way into Proust's masterpiece and the first sketches of some of the principal characters, it is an ordinary novel in the sense that *Remembrance of Things Past* is an extraordinary novel which changed our ways of seeing and feeling, and modified the perspective of European fiction. Something clearly happened to Proust between the time he discarded *Jean Santeuil* and the years 1908-10 when he is believed to have written *Contre Sainte-Beuve.* That something was the revelation of involuntary memory, which probably occurred when he was working on his translation of Ruskin. Although a good deal of it is in the form of an unrevised draft, we can see that his style has reached the point when it will be equal to the demands made on it in writing the *Remembrance.* It has the stamp, or what the French call the *griffe,* of the master, and pages which might very well have come from the later book:

"There were some Guermantes who seldom came to Paris, and who, wriggling, as every Guermantes did, beneath beaks that jutted between garnet chops and amethyst cheekbones, looked like some kind of swan, majestically plumed with purple feathers, which battens ill-temperedly on irises and heliotrope."

The similarities are not confined to character and imagery. The long winding sentences are there, but they do not crack in the middle or peter out as they had done in *Jean Santeuil;* they have the solidity and flexibility as well as the magic which belong to the mature Proust. There is the mixture of autobiography, memoirs, fiction and criticism which we find in the *Remembrance,* but though they have begun to combine they are not yet fused into a whole.

Mr. Walter A. Strauss has recently devoted a valuable book to Proust's literary criticism. Proust was, like Henry James, one of the most gifted literary critics who has ever practiced prose fiction. His criticism, however, was in no sense a sideline or an end in itself. It had two main purposes. What may be called his incidental criticism, which includes the brilliant parodies contained in *Pastiches et mélanges,* was written to enable him to find out how his predecessors had set about their job and as a means of preparing himself for his great undertaking. The criticism which is found in the *Remembrance* belongs to *his experience as an artist* and is an essential part of "the invisible vocation."

THE FIRST thing to be said about *Contre Sainte-Beuve* is that though it is one of the most penetrating and one of the most damaging criticisms ever made of that writer, it is not primarily "a book about Sainte-Beuve." Proust's intention is much better expressed by the title of the English edition than by the titles of either the French or American editions of the book: "By Way of Sainte-Beuve." For the attack on Sainte-Beuve is a curious and highly personal form of literary hygiene. Influence is both positive and negative. Proust had tradition in his bones. His work was not simply a *summa* of the French novel; he used all the great French writers from Racine and Saint-Simon to Balzac and Baudelaire. He also needed someone whom he could react *against.* It may appear somewhat strange

Mr. Turnell, a well-known English critic, is the author of *Baudelaire* and *The Novel in France.*



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that he should have chosen not another imaginative writer, but the most celebrated French critic of the nineteenth century as the perfect opponent, the ideal purge. It is not as strange as it seems; Sainte-Beuve did in fact exemplify precisely those vices which Proust was determined to exclude from his own work.

The prologue to *Contre Sainte-Beuve* is an illuminating statement of Proust's fundamental aesthetic principles. He begins by describing the incidents of the *madeleine,* the uneven paving stones and the row of trees which produced his revelation, and were the origin of the haunting visionary quality that pervades *Remembrance of Things Past.* He then goes on to contrast the intuitive and the analytical approaches to experience, and declares that "the truths of intellect are scarcely real at all." The first section consists largely of autobiography, but autobiography which has been transmuted by vision, and is a vindication of the theories set out in the prologue. Parts of these chapters, like the passages on sleep and the sunbeam playing on the balcony, were expanded and went into the novel.

The chapter called "Talking to Mamma" leads straight to the attack on the method of Sainte-Beuve which is supposed to have been made in a long conversation with his mother. The great weakness of Sainte-Beuve, we are told, was that instead of writing out of his deeper self—the artist's self—he remained on the surface, confusing the real self with the superficial everyday self. He was incapable of penetrating into the artist's experience; his emphasis on the importance of family and social connections, like his preoccupation with minor writers, was prompted by a desire to escape into the facile world of gossip, anecdotes and parties. In short, the famous "method" was the negation of Proust's own aim to probe the "invisible vocation" and to be a social analyst in the manner of Saint-Simon. He consolidates his position in later chapters which deal with Sainte-Beuve and Baudelaire, Gérard de Nerval, and Sainte-Beuve and Balzac. They illustrate the double approach. He is able to pay tribute to three writers who had played a major part in his own formation, and to show that Sainte-Beuve's inability to appreciate them sprang from his fundamental vices as a writer. He was the uncomprehending "analytical" as opposed to the "intuitive" type.

"Monsieur de Guermantes' Balzac" marks the transition from criticism to fiction. The last chapters describe the attitude of Proust, who is now indistinguishable from the narrator of *Remembrance of Things Past,* to the Guermantes, to the Faubourg Saint-Germain and the Cities of the Plain. This does not exhaust the interest of the book. We hear for the first time of Swann, "the two ways" and Mme. de Villeparisis. We see that the Réveillons in *Jean Santeuil* have become the Guermantes—their name actually changes in the course of the book—that the Marquis de Lomperolles had become M. de Quercy, who is a Guermantes and who will turn into the stupendous figure of Charlus.

The miscellaneous criticism in this work consists in the main of short pieces on painters and writers. It varies considerably in interest, but a number of the essays and notes are up to Proust's best standard as an occasional critic. *Contre Sainte-Beuve* is not simply a more impressive work than *Jean Santeuil;* it is an achievement of a different order. While we are glad to have the early novel, which is often delightful, its main interest lies in the light that it throws on Proust's development: on its intrinsic merits *Contre Sainte-Beuve* ranks immediately after *Remembrance of Things Past.*


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# A Profoundly Sad World

**TWO WOMEN. By Alberto Moravia. Farrar, Straus. $4.95.**

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

IN A DECREE dated May 20, 1952, all of Moravia's works up to that time were placed on the Index of Forbidden Books. Now, in *Two Women,* Moravia has escaped his well-known sexual obsession, an obsession that seems to me more adolescent than morbid, although such adolescence in a mature man is a kind of morbidity.

At any rate, over three years ago, in an interview with Lewis Nichols in the N.Y. *Times,* Moravia told of having spent nine months "in a pig-sty on top of a mountain" during the war because the Fascists wanted to hang him. "I started a novel about that," he went on. "Maybe the time for war novels has passed but when I get home I'll take it out and look at it again."

*Two Women* may be the result of his second look. Like Moravia himself, Cesira, a Roman shopkeeper, and her eighteen-year-old daughter, Rosetta, spend nine months on a mountain. While she was making money in the black market Cesira used to say to her daughter: "Pray God the war may go on another couple of years, then you'll not only put together a nice trousseau and dowry, but you'll become rich." In order to escape the bombings and the food shortage, Cesira takes her money and her daughter (Rosetta is another of Cesira's possessions) and goes to her native Ciociaria, southeast of Rome, only to find a food shortage, bombings and strafings, not to mention Fascists and humans less hampered by restrictions than those in Rome. So she flees to the mountains, where many of the other inhabitants of the area have taken refuge.

The nine months in Saint Euphemia, the long middle section of the book, is easily the best part. With slow sure skill, Moravia brings several minor characters to life: Filippo, the gluttonous and venal shopkeeper, who talks of nothing but food and money and whose motto is "No fool here"; Michele, Filippo's son, an unbeliever who almost became a priest and who serves Moravia as a sort of philosopher, properly ridiculous, of course; and there is Paride and the other peasants who do nothing but work and who regard money as a kind of god.

Out of these characters, Moravia creates a profoundly sad world. These people are not venal and stupid because of the war, but the war, by putting them to the test, reveals the worst and, seldom enough, the best in them. This world is sad because the people have nothing to do. The peasants work like beasts of burden; the evacuees waste their time thinking of food and the money to be made when the war is over.

Moravia's technical achievement is the way he conveys the empty and yet burdensome world through his narrator, Cesira, who is herself only slightly less stupid than her fellows. At one point the young Michele, exasperated, says to Cesira: "Until they've lost everything, they won't understand anything. They've got to lose everything and suffer and weep tears of blood. Only then will they grow up."

Before the book ends, Michele has lost his life, Cesira has become a common thief, and her daughter Rosetta, after the liberation, is raped by Moroccan soldiers and becomes a prostitute. Thanks to the war, Cesira thinks, human beings died and other human beings remained indifferent. On the way back to Rome, Rosetta's most recent lover is killed and Rosetta herself remains dry-eyed and apathetic. The whole of life had become obscured.

"Then an odd and unexpected thing happened: Rosetta began to sing" and to shed tears. Cesira rejoices. Those tears meant that Rosetta had not changed fundamentally. Sorrow had saved her for ". . . had it not been for this sorrow on Rosetta's part, there would have arrived in Rome, not the two unoffending women who had left it a year before, but the thief and the prostitute which they had become, during the war and because of the war."

I am not sure whether Moravia shares the sentiments of his narrator, but these last three pages of the book are certainly a monument to stupidity. One of these "unoffending women" who had left Rome a year before used to tell her daughter to pray that the war would continue. Out of ignorance? To be sure, but a self-satisfied ignorance just as her "sorrow" at the end is self-satisfied. Despite her suffering she has learned nothing. Moravia's characters, Michele perhaps excepted, are all trimmers, and he, who likes to quote Dante, has no doubt recognized them: *"Questo misero modo tengon l'anime triste di coloro che visser senza informia e senza lodo."*

# Biography of the Britannica

**THE GREAT E.B. The Story of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. By Herman Kogan. University of Chicago Press. $4.95.**

By VIVIAN MERCIER

IF ANYTHING could reconcile me to the existence of *E.B.* salesmen, it would be this book. As Mr. Kogan points out in his "Prefatory Notes," financing encyclopaedias has always been a problem. In the old days, the sale of one volume financed the next; nowadays, however, keeping twenty-four volumes continuously in print and up-to-date requires a tremendous capital investment. Hence the need for Mr. Toe-in-the-Door and his cohorts. Still, the fact remains that the *E.B.* has always made a profit for its owners, except when they have overexpanded operations in their hunt for vaster gains.

I have my own ideas about where



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that profit came from; the only *E.B.* publisher who ever ran any risk of going broke from overpaying his contributors was Archibald Constable in the early 1800's, but when bankruptcy overtook his other ventures, the *E.B.* was still showing a profit. Today the *E.B.* pays its erudite contributors the rate paid by The Commonweal to hop-skip-and-jump book reviewers such as myself. Yet the University of Chicago alone—the profits of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., are not revealed—has received over three million dollars in royalties during the past fifteen years. This would represent a flat $75 per article if divided equally among the authors of the current edition's 43,500 articles. Need I say more?

It will doubtless be clear from what I have already written that Mr. Kogan, previously known as the "Boswell of Marshall Field and Company" for his *Give the Lady What She Wants,* lays heavy stress on the financial side of the *E.B.*'s history. Indeed, the hero of the book, to whom almost half of its 314 pages are devoted, is Horace Hooper, the American entrepreneur who turned the *E.B.* into big business by issuing a cheap reprint of the ninth edition on installment terms in 1898. And Hooper undoubtedly deserves a starring role, for he was a genuine idealist as well as a wizard salesman. Of the famous eleventh edition (1911) he wrote as follows to Professor W. Alison Phillips, who helped both to edit it and to win for it the sponsorship of Cambridge University: "We could easily have produced a book at half the cost by doing hack work and taking a large share of it from the 10th edition; but I felt that I should like to know that I had been instrumental in producing a greater book, and in better form, than any other man."

Former Senator William Benton, publisher and chairman of the board of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., certainly continues the Hooper tradition of salesmanship judiciously blended with idealism. Nevertheless, the concluding chapters of this book—those after the Hooper saga—read far too much like articles from a house magazine. Or like public relations literature—which, of course, they are.

The opening, or pre-Hooper, chapters, which deal with the period 1768-1898—yes, this is the *E.B.*'s 190th anniversary—achieve the ideal blend of institutional history, history of scholarship, gossip about scholars, and just plain gossip. We learn about the drinking habits of the first two editors, both friends of Robbie Burns; about the munificence of Archie Constable; about Macaulay's attacks on the *E.B.* contribution of James Mill. We read of the reluctance of the economists Ricardo and Malthus to appear in the same supplement. We learn how the Bible articles of W. Robertson Smith in the "Scholars' Edition" (the ninth, 1875-89) actually caused a schism in the Free Kirk of Scotland.

Later, the tidbits for the reader who is not business-minded become fewer, but they are still succulent: E. V. Lucas' spoofing of Hooper's advertising campaigns; the bitter attacks on the eleventh edition by Willard Huntington Wright (destined to become better known as S. S. Van Dine, creator of the erudite detective Philo Vance); the scandals, resulting from feminine entanglements, which delayed two contributors to the fourteenth edition (1929). There is also a dispassionate account of the attacks on the eleventh edition for "anti-Catholic animus" and of the defense of the *E.B.* undertaken by Carlton J. H. Hayes of Columbia and other Catholic scholars.

Mr. Kogan combines the good newspaperman's mastery of narrative and expository prose with something of the scholar's conscience. He frankly admits that there are two schools of thought about the present-day *E.B.*: "One would insist on the scholastic superiority of previous editions. . . . The other would continue to espouse the idea of making the encyclopaedia more understandable and thus more appealing and desirable to a far greater mass of persons, while at the same time retaining its scholarly authority." On the whole, Mr. Kogan makes a good case for the second point of view, while supplying in his five-page bibliography details of a number of sources which favor the first. Since no credit is given, I assume the *E.B.*'s art staff are responsible for the twenty-one pages of cleverly chosen illustrations which enrich the book. All in all, this is the best bit of popular non-fiction I have read in a long while. But—*please*—no salesmen!

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# Women's Fiction

**A SUMMER PLACE. By Sloan Wilson. Ridge Press. (Published by Simon and Schuster.) $4.50.**

By WILLIAM JAMES SMITH

OFF IN a world not quite of its own there is a realm of literary endeavor known as "women's fiction." In a sense most fiction is women's fiction since women make up the great bulk of the fiction-buying, and presumably fiction-reading, audience. But "women's fiction" is something else again. Novels of this genre appear serially in one of the three or four big women's magazines and subsequently in book form. Sometimes, as in the case of *A Summer Place,* such a novel becomes a very successful book and earns the author a great deal of money. *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit,* incidentally, earned Mr. Wilson so much money that he is now operating through an organization known as the Ridge Press, which is intended to save Mr. Wilson some of the money the government so unfairly snatches from writers whose income is apt to come in erratic spurts.

Monetary considerations aside—and few women's fiction writers are so successful, or, frankly, as good, as Mr. Wilson—women's fiction has fairly consistent characteristics, none of which is necessarily sinful. This fiction must, first of all, be fairly "easy." Its aim is leisurely relaxation and it must not demand too much in the way of intelligence or patience. It should simulate a certain boldness of idea



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and at the same time incorporate all the current clichés. Here Mr. Wilson has succeeded admirably. He is quite seriously berated in some circles as a voice of the New Reaction because he portrayed a businessman sympathetically in *Gray Flannel*. He is, of course, an anthology of liberal aphorisms.

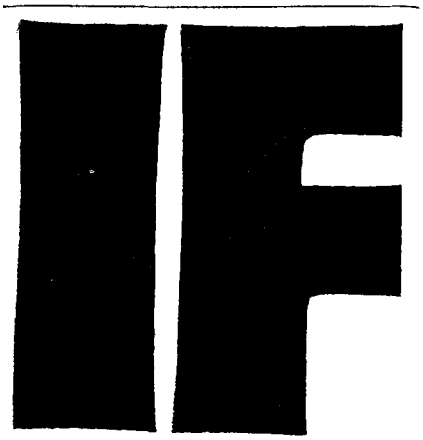
Story line is, by tradition, somewhat restricted in women's fiction. Like piped-in music the highest and lowest notes have been flattened out so as not to exacerbate sensitive nerves. In this respect, incidentally, women's fiction has made great strides. There are few of the preposterous taboos of not-many-years-ago that made women's magazines a laughing-stock.

A constant, almost an exclusive, theme of women's fiction is the Oak and the Willow motif. A Splendid Woman (all women are splendid except the heroine's foil, who is a Rich Bitch), is given a choice of two men as life's partner. One is an Oak and the other is a Willow. The story is how she ends up happily, after tribulation, with the Oak. In *A Summer Place* the heroine has made the terrible error of actually marrying the Willow, so you can imagine what she has to go through before she gets the Oak, and her son (Oak, though scion of Willow) in turn, gets his Splendid Woman (daughter of Oak out of Rich Bitch, but untainted).

This is all governed by fairly rigid conventions. The entrance of the Willow is always announced by the word "graceful." As soon as a man is described as having done something "gracefully" you know you have spotted your Willow. Conversely, the Oak is brought on to the sound of "hands like hams" played on the woodwinds. There are subsequent elaborations. The Willow drinks self-indulgently, he has pretensions to family status, he is "witty" (almost as bad as graceful) and infuriatingly self-controlled until the showdown. The Oak, on the other hand, blunders awkwardly, when he drinks he gets roaring drunk and awakens chastened, and at some point he always goes away and makes a lot of money.

The Splendidness of the Woman is even more elaborately adumbrated. Though she is seldom more loftily placed than in the role of simple housewife she has true greatness in her. Without her the Oak is nothing. But, splendid though she may be, she has her Moment of Weakness, which is the hinge of the plot. In *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* the heroine's Moment of Weakness comes when she turns from her Oak in momentary doubt just when she has almost made a man of him. In *A Summer Place* the heroine's Moment of Weakness has occurred before the opening of the novel proper when she married the Willow. This may be one reason that the novel is not as good as the earlier one, judged either as women's fiction or in a less supercilious frame of reference. The total effect is relaxing, all right, but rather lugubriously so.

Oh, and another feature of women's fiction is that all the main characters come with their faces left blank so you can fill them in with the lineaments of your own favorite movie stars. For *A Summer Place* I pick Greer Garson and well, maybe Gregory Peck again, and introducing two promising unknowns as the young lovers.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## Tame Revolution

THE REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION. By Mortimer J. Adler and Milton Mayer. Chicago Univ. Press. $3.75.

By THOMAS MOLNAR

A TAME book, indeed, this revolution in education! It is true one owes Mr. Adler's sound philosophical analysis and dialectical skill a few valuable chapters, the kind one so sorely misses in other, pragmatically oriented, works on the subject: some issues are clarified, the demarcation line between "traditionalists" and "modernists" is carefully drawn, the political aspects of the debate are not omitted. But then, after having shown the enormous distance separating the two camps on the concept of man, on the definition of science, and on the place of culture and intellect in the well-ordered curriculum, the authors return to the routine conclusion: "Many of the bitterest disputes in American education would yield to the facts without further effort, if the facts were known."

The facts, of course, *are* known, insofar as they may be known in the jungle of contradictory research-data. It is not the facts, but their interpretation, rooted in principles, prejudices, partisanships, and ideologies which determines the present —and future—state of the schools. Nobody would suggest that capital and labor, for example, can get together merely by studying the facts of market and production. Why would it be different with regard to consensus on educational matters?

The "modernists," according to the Messrs. Adler and Mayer, are convinced that contemporary so-



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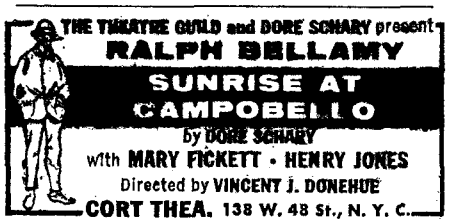
ciety, in the age of science, demands a new concept of education; they are split, however, on the issue whether the new, leisure-blessed citizen needs more vocational subjects adjusting him to the requirements of his work, or more liberal arts subjects to fill his work-free hours. To support the second point, the authors quote Mr. Robert Bendiner's study which concluded that "unless our whole educational system soon addresses itself to developing a nation of rounded amateurs, we shall only be creating more and more time for people who have less and less need for it."

The "traditionalists," we are told, do not believe in the essential novelty of this age: they stress the permanence of human nature, the continuity of history, the lineage of great men whose thinking constitutes our intellectual and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the traditionalist suspects that when his opponent speaks of "science," he really means "scientism," the naive philosophy of flux, progress, the moon turning into a big chunk of cheese.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If such are some of the differences separating the two main positions, how can we expect a reconciliation and the elaboration of a unified curriculum in grade schools, high schools and colleges, and a less chaotic, commercialized and trivial approach to adult education? The usual argument is that we need more money, more buildings, more public concern. Even the authors of the present book, who, one would assume, are not easily swayed by slogans, repeat the supreme charge: twelve billions per year on education, compared with fourteen and a half spent on tobacco and alcohol, indicts the American public's lack of interest in its institutions of learning.

But not even a hundred and twenty billion dollars can cure our education if the present low intellectual level of teacher-training persists in discouraging the best teachers, potential and actual, who are nauseated by method courses and by indoctrination. Or if, in the name of combating an "undemocratic divisiveness," we continue to leave our students uncommitted, in a philosophical vacuum where they are struggling to piece together the unconnected bits of information with which they are daily fed. Or if the schools cease to be institutions with limited but clearly defined functions, and open themselves to every pressure group in society. (Our high schools, veritable supermarkets, teach today 274 different courses, representing 170 subject-matters!)

The last point brings us back to the authors' and Mr. Bendiner's idea, namely that we need "rounded amateurs" as the end-product of schooling. I think this ideal is dangerous, not only because it is a vague term, subject to the sophist's manipulation, but also because in the modern world it connotes an indiscriminate receptiveness, the "let's play" approach to learning and achievement. It is true that leisure and the very concept of citizenship in a democracy enable, theoretically, all men to benefit from a liberal education which was extended by Athenian democracy to the restricted number of free; but it is highly questionable whether prosperity, easy life, and unlimited leisure-opportunities promote the cause of liberal education.

The citizen as a rounded amateur is a far cry from the Greek ideal; he may, rather, be the enlarged version of the progressive educator's "whole child" who, between adjustment, emotional balance, civic-mindedness and participation in every cause and committee is prevented from anchoring his interests more than skin deep.

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C. K. YEARLEY, JR. will discuss the institution of slavery and the U.N.'s campaign for human rights. "Slavery, as practiced in Saudi Arabia, may prove difficult to control, yet where it is practiced there it is not particularly hard to recognize. Its detection elsewhere is a formidable problem, for the institution has numerous forms which are found in practically all the regions of the world."

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THOMAS MOLNAR will discuss Heidegger's attitude toward humanism. "The successive images of man that science and ideology — the offspring of Western humanism — have proposed are unsatisfactory because they limit man; they either enclose him in ambiguous definitions such as 'rational animal,' or confine his aspirations to historical forms such as 'free citizen,' 'liberal bourgeois,' 'class-conscious proletarian,' etc. But man's dignity is not to be found in the forms elaborated by science and history; 'man's dignity is his belonging to Being.' "

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